

Message Text

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FOR: CU/ARA

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: SCUL, CS
SUBJECT: UNESCO CULTURAL CONFERENCE, BOGOTA, JAN. 10-20

REF: STATE 033371

1. BOGOTA CONFERENCE RECEIVED MODERATE STANDARD
INTERNATIONAL WIRE SERVICE COVERAGE BY COSTA RICAN
NEWS MEDIA EXCEPT FOR LA NACION, NATION'S LARGEST
DAILY NEWSPAPER. FOLLOWING CONFERENCE, LA NACION
CARRIED A SERIES OF EDITORIALS FOCUSING ON THE
FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AND FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION
ISSUE RAISED BY THE VENEZUELAN PROPOSAL.

2. A SUMMARY OF THE PAPER'S JANUARY 24 EDITORIAL
ON "MASS COMMUNICATION" CAPSULIZES COSTA RICA'S NEWS
MEDIA REACTION TO THE QUESTION OF PRESS MANAGEMENT.
"WE DON'T OBJECT TO SUCH STATE-OWNED MEDIA IF THEY
OPERATE IN FREE COMPETITION WITH THE EXISTING MEDIA
OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR. WHAT WE ARE AGAINST IS ANY
ATTEMPT TO CONSTRAIN OR LIMIT THE INALIENABLE RIGHT..
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WHICH NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER INDEPENDENT MEDIA HAVE
TO FREELY AND OBJECTIVELY INFORM AND TO BE INFORMED."

3. CONCERNED WITH CENSORSHIP A JAN. 25 EDITORIAL
SIAD "WE JOURNALISTS MUST REMAIN ALERT WHENEVER THE
SLIGHTEST SYMPTOMS OF CONTROL OVER FREEDOM OF
THOUGHT OR OF THE PRESS APPEAR."

4. ALSO ON THE 25TH LA NACION INTERNATIONAL PAGE EDITOR/COLUMNIST WROTE ON "UNESCO AND INFORMATION", SAYING THAT "PARTICIPATION BY GOVERNMENT IN THE FIELD OF COMMUNICATIONS DOES NOT ITSELF PRESENT A MAJOR DANGER TO DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES LIKE COSTA RICA AND VENEZUELA WHERE THESE ARE ADEQUATE POWER BALANCES AND WHERE INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS ARE RESPECTED." HE FURTHER COMMENTED "THAT DICTATORIAL OR AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNMENTS WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ANY RECOMMENDATION BY UNESCO FAVORING THE PARTICIPATION OF THE STATE TO LEGITIMIZE HEAVIER OPPRESSION."

5. SUMMARY: WHILE OPPOSING THE SPECIFICS OF THE VENEZUELAN-BOGOTA PROPOSED, COSTA RICAN JOURNALISTS SHARE THE VIEW THAT THE DEVELOPED WORLD'S MEDIA NEGLECT LATIN AMERICAN ISSUES, AND SUPPORT THE BUILDING OF STRONGER INDEPENDENT HEMISPHERIC NEWS ORGANIZATIONS.
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